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REPORT OF COMMITTEE U ON PATRIOTIC SERVICE

[Prepared for the Annual Meeting, Baltimore, December 28, 1918.]

Circumstances have combined to make the report of this Committee hardly more than tentative. Former reports have been able to discuss matters in some general way, but since the appointment of the present chairman the situation in which the colleges have found themselves has been abnormal. The establishment of the Student Army Training Corps and its speedy dissolution, the signing of the armistice with its effect upon the morale of the entire student body, the prevalence of the influenza which compelled the closing of many institutions, have combined to make any form of report difficult.

In gathering material for the report, the chairman asked suggestions from the Secretary of the Association as well as from the members of the committee as to what should be the general field to be covered. It seemed to be the general opinion, that the report should cover three fields: first, the actual contribution of the universities to national service; second, the general effect of the S. A. T. C. and the war situation upon the universities, especially in view of some possible revelation as to the general efficiency of our university system; and third, the steps that should be taken to adapt our university education to the approaching period of reconstruction.

In order to gather the material for a report that should embody anything more than the general opinions of the Committee, a questionnaire was sent to an official representative of the Association in each of the member institutions. This questionnaire covered the three points of interest stated above. The returns which arrived in time to be used in making this report came from approximately one third of the total members of the Association. These returns, however, were fairly representative in that they came from no single locality and from no single type of institution. The opinions expressed and the data given, while not warranting any scientifically accurate presentation of the total situation, are sufficiently representative and uniform to forecast the probable general tendencies

in university opinion and activity. It is to be hoped that the coming year will enable the Committee, if such action seems desirable, to pursue this investigation and obtain a complete and accurate survey of the contributions made by the universities to the national service during the period of the war.

The following results, however, are believed to be sufficiently indicative of representative opinion to warrant their being submitted to the Association. In interpreting the questionnaires it has seemed to your Committee that the inability of institutions to form distinct opinions regarding the possible weaknesses of university education shown by experience during the war, and to forecast changes desirable in the approaching years, are in themselves data of importance.

It should be added that the opinions given on the questionnaire, while occasionally the result of local inquiry, are generally personal, representing as a rule not the opinions of the administrative side of university life, but rather that of professors who in the nature of the case would be particularly sensitive to interests in their own special fields of study.

With these general cautions we submit the following results of our inquiry, omitting the figures and interpreting such statistics as have been gathered as indications of tendencies rather than as possessed of statistical completeness:

I. The universities have been very generally used by the United States government, both for general war work and for the Student Army Training Corps. There have been only a few institutions, and in these the number of men students was not large, where practically the entire plant has not been used by the government. Many of these institutions have been used wholly or in part during vacations as well as during the academic year.

II. The universities report a very general use of members of their faculties by the United States government, both in its military and non-military branches. The number of faculty members who have been used in strictly military service is notable. Second only to this activity has been the use of professors as surgeons and physicians, both on the field and in sanitary, hospital, and ambulance service. Very general use, also, has been made of the departments of chemistry and physics. A considerable number of professors have been used as interpreters, and as athletic directors. A negligible number have been used as chaplains.

Faculty members have been active in practically all of the non-military forms of government service, especially in the State Department, War Department, and Food and Fuel Administrations. A very considerable number have been employed by the Bureau of Public Information, in the general administration of the S. A. T. C., in Draft Boards, and in the National Council of Defense. They also have been used in large numbers in the Red Cross both at home and abroad; in the Y. M. C. A., especially in its educational and administrative service, both at home and particularly abroad. The number used in the Y. W. C. A., the American Library Association, and other forms of non-governmental service, has been considerable.

III. As regards the Student Army Training Corps, the all but unanimous testimony is:

(a) That the effect of the establishment was the practical absorption of the undergraduate body of men;

(b) That the academic work in the S. A. T. C. was distinctly poorer, largely because of the demands of the military officials, with consequent loss of time for preparation. This was of course to be expected, as the S. A. T. C. was not established primarily as an educational, but as a military institution.

(c) That a large proportion of the men who entered the S. A. T. C. were not strictly speaking college men. The estimates as to those who would otherwise not have entered college, run from one-third to one-half of the total number enrolled. In a few institutions the percentage is notably higher, in one case running as high as eighty per cent. In others it would appear that the membership was practically that of the existing undergraduate body, the estimate of those who would not otherwise have been college men running as low as ten per cent in one case, and in other cases between that and twenty per cent.

(d) That the proportion of the S. A. T. C. who would be likely to continue in college is from sixty to seventy-five per cent. The general average would be approximately two-thirds.

(e) That the general effect of the S. A. T. C. upon the educational life of the universities was injurious. A large proportion of the institutions confess to having difficulty with the military control. Very few of them seem to feel that the S. A. T. C. has contributed anything of educational value to our educational system. Such an opinion, however, should take account of the fact that the S. A. T. C. was not given a really fair trial, because of the influenza and the short period which followed the readjustment incident to the establishment of the Corps.

(f) That the details of the S. A. T. C. methods have practically no value for colleges and universities. The four quarter system, the

standardization of work in the sections of the class, and the text-book method, have won practically no favor from those filling out the reports.

IV. The total effect of the war, not including the specific effect of the S. A. T. C., has been on the whole fairly uniform.

(a) There has been a decrease in the attendance of undergraduate men, of men in the graduate schools, and in the law schools. Medical schools seem in some cases to have increased in attendance. As might be expected, the women's attendance has not been greatly affected.

(b) There has been a practical disappearance of all forms of intercollegiate athletics, except football. It is to be borne in mind, however, that football is the outstanding autumn sport.

(c) The general university life and spirit have been seriously disturbed in an overwhelming majority of the colleges. Fraternity life has been almost destroyed, although the sororities do not seem to have been greatly affected.

(d) The effect upon the religious and moral tone of the institutions has been not so uniform. Many universities report an improvement in this regard, and only a small group reports a lowering of morale.

(e) There is all but uniform testimony as to increase of interest in the social sciences, history, Romance languages, and physical and biological sciences. There has been a considerable decrease of interest in classical studies, and a decrease, amounting in many cases to practically a disappearance, in German.

(f) There has been an all but uniform increase of interest in politics and international affairs and in the history of Great Britain, France and Italy. These facts ought to have very considerable attention as indicating what may become a permanent intellectual sympathy.

(g) There has been a very decided increase in favor of military preparation, although this in some institutions seems to have been somewhat weakened by the establishment of the armistice.

(h) The war, with its consequent changes in academic life, is reported to have had on the whole a stimulating and broadening effect upon the professors' lives and habits.

(i) While only one college reports friction between the national groups in the faculty, a considerable proportion of the institutions state that professors were discharged or that they resigned because of pro-German sympathy.

V. There is considerable unanimity also as regards the disclosures made by the experience during war times as to the possible weak-

nesses in our university system. Here, however, it is to be borne in mind that a very considerable proportion of those reporting apparently feel that the time is too short to reach any definite conclusion. Of those who did report, two-thirds deny that the universities have been too remote from life. About the same number deny that university teaching has lacked discipline. A large majority hold that it has lacked emphasis on citizenship. Opinion, however, is all but unanimous that universities have shown themselves readily adapted to the needs of social readjustment.

These opinions are not to be taken as a final formulation of the attitude of university professors. They are, however, provocative of thought as to whether universities are suffering from undue self-complacency.

VI. As regards changes in education which our experience during the war would seem to argue are needed in the approaching period of social reconstruction, the opinion is singularly uniform. Practically all the replies made to the inquiry favor new emphasis on the study of Romance and English languages and literatures, modern and current history, sociology, political economy, political science, philosophy, ethics, literature, physical and biological sciences.

A very interesting group of opinions, again overwhelmingly uniform, is in favor of having prescribed undergraduate courses and curricula. The number of replies dealing with the desirability of general cultural courses and emphasis on research, is not so numerous, but is overwhelmingly in favor. There is also, so far as opinion has been expressed, a uniform belief that there should be special courses preparatory for citizenship. There is all but absolute uniformity in favor of closer relations between the universities of the United States and those of Great Britain and France. Only three of those reporting favor closer relations with German institutions. A considerable number favor closer relations with the Italian and Latin-American institutions.

In reply to the question as to whether extra-mural activities of professors should be favored in times of peace, the replies are almost unanimously affirmative, with a large majority favoring a reduction of class-room requirements in the case of those rendering such service.]

One subject upon which there is absolute unanimity is that an increase of salaries is imperative. A corollary to this conviction appears in the very general belief that the teaching profession cannot be made to appeal to the strongest and best students under present

economic conditions, and that graduate students will be drawn away into non-teaching careers.

The opinion as to whether military training should be established in universities is on the whole negative.

The Committee:

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